Wheaton Library Public Meeting

7:30 p.m., Monday,
February 9, 2009

Meeting Purpose

- Report on status of Wheaton Library Capital Improvement Program

- Provide background on Wheaton Redevelopment and the possible role of a library in that redevelopment

- Identify and understand community concerns

Redevelopment Background

- 1990 Wheaton Sector Plan severely restricted redevelopment.

- 2000 National Historic Trust Main Street Program helped community advance concept designs for Wheaton.

- Factors influencing the shift:
    - Success of Silver Spring redevelopment
    - Stagnation in Wheaton.

2000 Historic Trust Main Street Program Surfaced Community's Desire for a Town Square

- To create a vision for Wheaton as an attractive and economically vibrant place

- Community recognized benefits of a Town Square

- Four Revitalization Scenarios included a Town Square

Scenario I
Wheaton as a Fixer-Upper

Scenario II
Wheaton as an Entertainment District

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**Scenario III
Wheaton as a
Residential Village**

**Scenario IV
Wheaton as an
Office Center**

2005 Town Square Vision

- Redevelopment Advisory Committee developed conceptual images of a Town Center

- Approach encompassed mixed-use and increased density

- Integrated the four Historic Trust scenarios

2005 Vision of Town Square
(Northward View from Grandview Ave. and Reedie Dr.)

2005 Vision of Downtown Wheaton
(Northward view from intersection of Veirs Mill Rd. and Georgia Ave.)

Downtown Silver Spring

View of Rockville Town Square

National Trends in Revitalization and Redevelopment

- Smart Growth – Mixed-use development with transit component. These are key attractors for private developers
- Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design standards (LEED)
- Libraries create a sense of place, strengthening communities
- Today's libraries not only provide information in multiple formats and media, but also function as community centers, providing opportunities for meeting space and a place to experience arts and cultural activities.

Relocation of the Wheaton Library is being examined in the context of redevelopment and revitalization of downtown Wheaton.

Library site selection would be part of that process.

2007 Study by The Urban Libraries Council:
"Making Cities Stronger: Public Library Contributions to Local Economic Development"

- Study commissioned by the Urban Libraries Council (ULC) and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

- Notes a shift in the role of public libraries – "…from passive, recreational reading and research institutions to active economic development agents."

- Public library buildings are catalysts for physical development:
    - They bolster downtown and suburban cultural and commercial activity.
    - Among developers, libraries are gaining recognition for their ability to attract tremendous foot traffic, provide long-term tenancy, and complement neighboring retail and cultural destinations.
    - Library buildings are versatile. They fit in a wide mix of public and private sector developments.

http://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/making_cities_stronger.pdf

Rockville Public Library

Rockville Library –Interior Views

From Washington Post, Metro Section, February 2, 2009:
"Business Brisk at Area Libraries"
by Annie Gowan, Washington Post Staff Writer

"Before the Germantown library opened in 2007, there was hardly any "downtown" to speak of ⋯. Now it's an important civic anchor, a main street where none existed, and the busiest library in the county."

"What I think doesn't get enough recognition is the role libraries play in the economic vitality and development of a community." – Jim Rettig, President, American Libraries Association
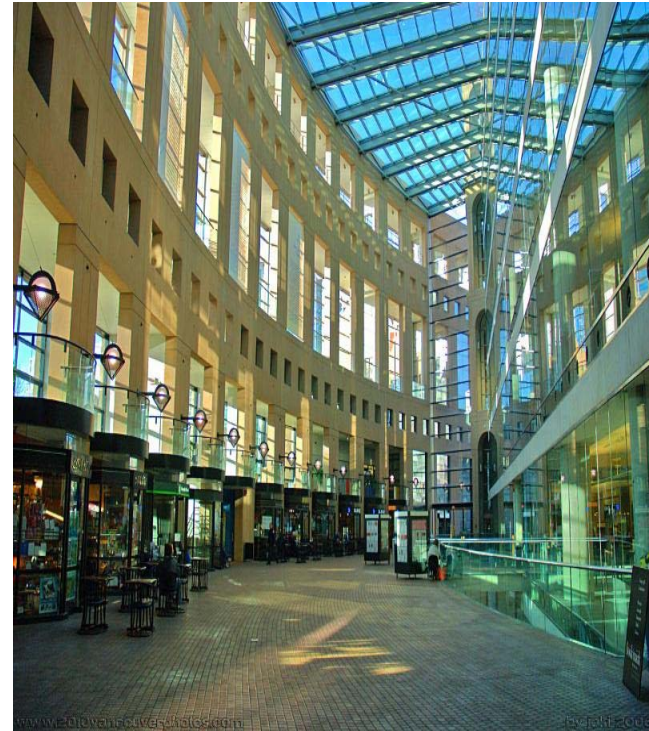
New Public Libraries in Revitalized Downtown Environments: Yonkers, NY and Salt Lake City, UT

Vancouver, B.C. Public Library

Some more libraries to "Google (image)"....

Alameda County Library
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Library System
Allen County Public Library
Anchorage Municipal Libraries
Ann Arbor District Library
Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System
Baltimore County Public Library
Brooklyn Public Library
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Carroll County Public Library
Chattahoochee Valley Regional Library System
Chesterfield County Public Library
Cleveland Public Library
Columbus Metropolitan Library
Dayton Metro Library
DeKalb County Public Library
Des Plaines Library
District of Columbia Public Library
East Baton Rouge Parish Library

Fresno County Library
Grand Rapids Public Library
Germantown Library
Hartford Public Library
Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Indianapolis Marion County Public Library
Jacksonville Public Library
Johnson County Library
Kansas City Public Library
Kern County Library
Lincoln City Libraries
Madison Public Library
Memphis Public Library
Metropolitan Library System
Milwaukee Public Library
Minneapolis Public Library
New York Public Library
Oshawa Public Library
Pierce County Library System
Pima County Public Library
Pioneer Library System

Providence Public Library
Public Libraries of Saginaw
Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County
Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County
Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County
Queens Library
Redwood City Public Library
Rockville Library
Saint Paul Public Library
Salt Lake City Public Library
San Francisco Public Library
San Luis Obispo City-County Library
Santa Clara County Library
Schaumburg Township Library
Seattle Public Library
Sno-Isle Libraries
Spokane Public Library
Toledo-Lucas County Public Library
Worcester Public Library

International Downtown Association Advisory Panel

- Assessed how government facilities could foster redevelopment
- Over 4 days looked at the greater Wheaton area, talking to over 100 community stakeholders

Recommended:

- Grow the downtown from the inside out with Parking Lot 13 as the starting point
- Create a new civic identity by redeveloping a portion of Lot 13 into a Town Square
- Locate a Library, encompassing an arts/culture center, in the new Town Square

Trade-Offs Between Alternatives

New Library in Town Center	Renovated Existing Library
An expanded, state-of-the-art library and an active civic structure that helps define the Town Square.	Provides state-of-the-art library within the existing structure.
Provides the opportunity for more aesthetically pleasing architecture.	Exterior building architecture would remain unchanged.
Can increase the number of patrons by providing a central location and easier access for non-drivers.	Ensures existing customer base is maintained. Provides "auto-friendly" access to neighborhoods in vicinity.

Trade-Offs Between Alternatives

New Library in Town Center	Renovated Existing Library
Structured vehicle parking and access to Metro rail and bus services.	Ample surface parking already exists (170 spaces).
No loss of Library use.	Library would be closed 1 1/2 to 2 years during renovation.
Frees up the existing library site for other County uses.	Less budgetary impact.
Perceived safety concerns regarding the downtown.	Perceived security in current location.

Wheaton Library: Next Steps

- Period allowed for public comment until Monday, March 2, 2009 at wheatonlibrary@montgomerycountymd.gov

- County Executive decision on Library's part in the redevelopment process

- Capital Improvement Program (CIP) submitted regarding existing Library

Redevelopment Process for Wheaton: Next Steps

- Follow successful Silver Spring approach
- Public meeting regarding Master Developer Solicitation
- Solicitation and selection of a Development Team
- Develop projects with stakeholders, guided by a revised Sector Plan
- Master Development Team executes projects
- Recognition that this approach takes longer and requires Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to maintain library

Throughout both renovation/relocation of the Wheaton Library and the revitalization of downtown Wheaton – public input will continue to be part of the process

For Additional Information about Wheaton Redevelopment:

- Visit www.wheatonmd.org/redevelopment

  www.wheatonmd.org/redevelopment/library
- Or contact:

  Rob Klein at 240-777-8125

  rob.klein@montgomerycountymd.gov

  Pete McGinnity at 240-777-8126

  peter.mcginnity@montgomerycountymd.gov